Amendments To The Specification:

Please replace previously amended paragraph **[0026]** with the following further amended paragraph **[0026]**:

[0026] Threads **12** of first component **10**, and threads **22** of second component **20**, can be formed by various machining techniques that enable the synchronization of the timing of the thread profiles. Sleeve **30** does not require any specialized machining processes because timing is not required. This fabrication process ensures that there is essentially no gap between mating face **14** of first component **10** and mating face **24** of second component **20** after connection sleeve **30** is screwed into placed. As illustrated in FIGS. 1 – 5, but particularly FIG. 1, sleeve or connection collar **30** includes an internal straight thread ~~(preferably a single continuous thread)~~ such that when first component **10** is in pre-defined axial alignment with component **20**, collar **30** threads continuously from the first component **10** onto the second component **20**. ~~A straight thread is a thread such as commonly used with bolts or other load-bearing threaded connections, as opposed to a thread that is tapered to provide a seal such as commonly used in threaded pipe connections.~~

Please amend previously amended paragraph **[0027]** with the following further amended paragraph **[0027]**:

[0027] FIG. 5A illustrates another embodiment of this invention. In this embodiment, mechanical synchronization of the timings of threads **12** and threads **22** is not required. Instead, first component **10**, having connection sleeve **30** already threaded thereon, and second component **20** are placed in the proper axial alignment, i.e., such that any openings that need to be aligned, are aligned. For example, in the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 5A, opening **1** in first component **10** is aligned with opening **2** in second component **20** and opening **3** in first component **10** is aligned with opening **4** in second component **20**. During the connection make-up process, first component **10** and second component **20** are separated, while the alignment of openings **1** and **2** and of openings **3** and **4** is maintained, until the distance between first component **10** and second component **20** (the "required distance") is such that if threads **12** and threads **22** were continuous through the required distance, they would form a continuous-thread path between first component **10** and second component **20**. Proper alignment of the openings between component **10** and component **20** can be provided using alignment pins, or nipples **6** and nipple recipients **7**, that mate between the components, e.g., through openings **1** and **2** or

through openings **3** and **4**, as illustrated in FIG. 1 - 3. The required distance between first component **10** and second component **20** may be maintained by a spacer. For example, a spacer **26** may be placed between components **10** and **20** such that a first end **26a** of spacer **26** abuts mating face **14** of component **10** and a second end **26b** of spacer **26** abuts mating face **24** of component **20**. In this example, spacer **26** is a suitable piece of metal, as will be familiar to those skilled in the art. The spacer **26** may be sized to space the first and second components by a desired stand-off separation distance **28**. In another embodiment, illustrated in FIG. 5B, a spacer **27** is adjustable and is in the form of a screw. A threaded end **27b** of a spacer **27** is screwed into component **20** via mating face **24** until the proper stand-off separation distance **29** is achieved as shown, and a top end **27a** of spacer **27** abuts mating face **14** of component **10**. In ~~some implementations~~ an alternative embodiment and as illustrated in FIG. 5B, an indention **24a** is provided in component **20** at mating face **24**. In ~~some embodiments, the~~ this embodiment, stand-off separation distance **29** is preferably ~~may be~~ equal to the distance of one thread pitch or less. Once the required distance is maintained, connection sleeve **30** is threaded from first component **10** to second component **20**. In yet another embodiment, the connection can be made up without a spacer by physically moving component **20** axially away from component **10** until the required distance is achieved and connection sleeve **30** is threaded from first component **10** to second component **20** at least until the threads of sleeve **30** engage with the threads on component **20**. Other embodiments, either using a spacer or not, to generate the required distance are within the scope of this invention. Once the required distance is maintained, connection sleeve **30** is threaded from first component **10** to second component **20**. The required distance between mating faces **14** and **24** can range from zero to several thread pitches. Any or all parts of a connection according to this invention may be coated with a suitable coating to provide protection from galling and/or corrosion, as will be familiar to those skilled in the art.